Procurement of wheat

642. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the procurement target for wheat this year;

(b) whether the procurement target has been fulfilled;

(c) how much wheat was procured by official agencies and how much by private traders; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to meet the gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Since procurement of foodgrains under Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations carried out by Government agencies is open ended, no targets are fixed. However based on estimates given by State Food Secretaries before the start of the Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2007-08, an estimate of 151.5 lakh tonnes was drawn up for RMS 2007-08. Against this, 111.04 lakh tonnes of wheat was procured in RMS 2007-08 for the Central Pool.

(c) Government agencies (FCI & State agencies) have procured 111.04 lakh tonnes of wheat in RMS 2007-08 under MSP operations for the Central Pool. Data on procurement of wheat by private traders is not maintained in this Department.

(d) In order to meet the requirements of TPDS and welfare schemes, the Government has decided to import the required quantity of wheat, upto 50 lakh tonnes during 2007-08.

BPL households in Kerala

643. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the number of BPL households in Kerala as assessed by the Government in August, 2004 based on actual identification through gramsabhas is 20.22 lakhs against 15.54 lakhs estimated by the Central Government based on a formula and accordingly there is a shortage of 16,449 MTs foodgrains for the distribution of foodgrains to BPL card holders in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would issue necessary approval of the BPL households as identified by the State Government and allot foodgrains accordingly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) A request from Government of Kerala has been received for enhancing the targeted BPL families from 15.54 lakhs at present to 20.22 lakhs.

Based on the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 projected on the population estimates as on 1st March, 2000, the targeted

number of BPL families in Kerala is 15.54 lakhs. Foodgrain allocations under TPDS for these families are being made.

(c) No, Sir.

Expansion of foodgrains storage facility

†644. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps being taken for expansion of foodgrains storage facility in the areas relating to shortage of foodgrains in the country;

(b) whether some new godowns are being constructed for expansion of foodgrains storage system in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) During the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) the FCI has proposed to construct 4.04 lakhs MTs storage capacity in the country particularly in North East Region, Sikkim, J&K as well as other States like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand etc., where storage capacity is inadequate.

In addition, under the Plan Scheme for construction of storage godowns Government is providing financial assistance to the State Governments of North East Region including Sikkim and Jammu & Kashmir for creation of 30,160 MTs storage capacity in the North East Region and Jammu & Kashmir.

During the Eleventh Five Year Plan, priority will be accorded to creation of additional storage capacity in the North East Region, Sikkim and Jammu & Kashmir by the State Governments with financial assistance from the Government under the Plan Scheme for construction of storage godowns.

Further, under the National Policy of Bulk Handling, Storage and Transportation of foodgrains, a capacity of 5.5 lakh MTs is being created both in procuring and deficit States on Build, Own and Operate (BOO) basis.

In addition, full powers have been given to the FCI to hire additional storage capacity at the micro level/for meeting the emergent requirement, from the Central Warehousing Corporation/State Warehousing Corporations/State Governments and private parties for storage of foodgrains.

(b) and (c) At present, no godown is being State of Uttarakhand.

Electronic weighing and measuring machine

†645. SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new electronic weighing and measuring machines are being used in the matter of trade;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.